



Ever After High



# Apple White's Story

# **Ever After High**

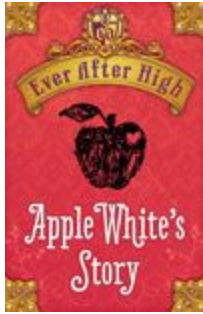
*Apple White's Story*

**by Shannon Hale**



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Apple White opened the pink silk curtains even wider to let in all that buttery sunshine.

“My, what a perfect day for travel!” she said.

Her bedroom was bustling with servants in matching white uniforms, dwarves running errands, and friendly woodland creatures.

A robin hovered before Apple, a red slipper in its beak. It cocked its head to one side as if asking a question.

“Yes, pack that one,” said Apple. “In fact, let’s just pack all my shoes, shall we?”

The squirrels rustling across the floor squeaked in unison. They began carrying shoes from the closet and depositing them in an open trunk as if storing nuts for the winter.

“Not the blue ones,” Apple called to a bluebird in her sock drawer. “The white ones, if you please!”

Apple’s MirrorPhone played a measure of One Reflection’s single “You Don’t Know You’re Charming” to announce she’d received another hex message. This one was from Briar Beauty. Apple typed with one hand while brushing her blond curls with the other. Her hair never seemed to need brushing, but she was an overachiever.

BRIAR: Apple! When will you get to Ever After High?

APPLE: My father is prepping the Hybrid Carriage now. I should be there in a few short hours.

BRIAR: Hexcellent. Am planning a Book-to-School party. Going to be a page-ripper!!!

APPLE: I’m there. Charm you later!

“Snoozy! Snappy!” Apple called to her dwarf lackeys. “The first four trunks are ready to go. Would you be so kind as to carry them down? You, too, Pouty—don’t you stick out that bottom lip, you silly.”

“My name’s not Pouty,” Frank said poutily.

“Careful with that end, Sloppy!” Apple said cheerily.

“My name is Phil,” Sloppy grumbled.

Apple laughed. “You sillies!”

She patted their heads, and they couldn’t help but smile. Who could hold back a smile when looking at Apple White?



The sounds of cheering floated in through her window. Apple stepped onto her balcony, and the cheering grew louder. In the courtyard below, hundreds of men, women, and children from the village had gathered, many wearing I ♥ APPLE T-shirts.

“My dear subjects, you are simply, unquestionably perfect!” she called out, tossing candy and coins to the crowd. She kept a candy-and-coin basket on the balcony so she would be ready for adoring crowds at a moment’s notice.

“No, *you* are perfect!” someone shouted, and the cheering renewed.

She pressed her hand to her heart. The whole world was so perfectly splendid she could just burst!

Above Apple, a flock of birds carried a long pink ribbon in their beaks. A message was stitched across the satin ribbon: WE LOVE YOU, APPLE! EMBRACE YOUR DESTINY!

*Destiny.* She was beginning her Legacy Year, the first step in the journey to achieve her own Happily Ever After. Apple could hardly wait.

Apple strode down to the courtyard, where her parents waited like a portrait of the ideal king and queen. Her mother’s black hair was curled under her golden crown. Her skin was still white as snow, her lips red as blood. She was as beautiful now as she had been when a magic mirror had named her the Fairest One of All.

Apple’s father stood beside his wife, one hand on his sword hilt, always ready to do battle—though of course he’d never actually done any battle. His claim to fame had been falling in love with a comatose girl inside a glass coffin. But he looked so regal with a sword.

“This is a royally important year,” said her mother as she helped Apple into the Hybrid Carriage. Her voice was high and a little squeaky, as if all that time spent lost in the woods with squirrels had taken its toll. “I am so proud of you. I know you will prepare yourself to be the perfect Snow White.”

The maids, servants, guards, and dwarves in the huge Hybrid Carriage all nodded. Apple blushed. They must have noticed how dedicated she was to her subjects, how hard she had been studying Kingdom Management, all the time she put into preparing to be a queen—

“Just look at her eyes, her skin,” whispered one of her maids.

“I did not think it possible,” a groomsman whispered back, “but she is becoming even more beautiful than her mother.”

“So beautiful,” said a manservant. “The *perfect* Snow White.”

“Well, except for the hair. A shame she was born blond.”

Apple winced.

“I think her blond hair is even lovelier than her mother’s black hair.”

“How can you? The fairy tale specifies ‘hair like ebony’—”

“Listen, the hair doesn’t matter. Her eyes, her nose, those lips, that profile! She is the definition of beauty.”

Apple turned her face to the window as the Hybrid Carriage started on its way. Was that all everyone saw in her? A perfect profile? A beauty like her mother? Surely being Snow White meant more than just looking pretty and having black hair.

Legacy Year would be *her* year. The beginning to her story. But she didn’t just want to prove that she was pretty enough to be a queen, black hair or blond. She wanted to prove she could rule like one.

## About the Author

*New York Times* bestselling author Shannon Hale knew at age ten that it was her destiny to become a writer. She has quested deep into fairy tales in such enchanting books as *The Goose Girl*, *Book of a Thousand Days*, *Rapunzel's Revenge*, and Newbery Honor recipient *Princess Academy*. With the princely and valiant writer Dean Hale, Shannon coauthored four charming children, who are free to follow their own destinies. Just so long as they get to bed on time.

*The End is only the beginning.*

Don't miss these exciting stories from other students at Ever After High, available as original ebook exclusives!

*Raven Queen's Story*

*Briar Beauty's Story*

*Madeline Hatter's Story*

*Ashlynn Ella's Story*

*Hunter Huntsman's Story*

School is in session at Ever After High!

The story continues in *The Storybook of Legends*, coming October 8, 2013.

Available however books are sold.

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